

Editorial

After the publication of the first case of ASR damage in concrete in The Netherlands in the late eighties, a committee, CUR BC 56: *"ASR in concrete"* was set up in 1990 to study the problem and to draw guidelines and recommendations for preventing damage due to ASR in new concrete. In 1994, the committee published its work as CUR Recommendation 38: *"Measures to prevent damage due to alkali-silica reaction in concrete"*. Since promulgation of that document, several new developments in the field of ASR have taken place, especially in the area of design of new concrete mixes for large structures. Various experts and parties in the construction industry were of the opinion that the preventive measures outlined in that recommendation were not adequate enough to serve the purposes for which they were designed.

In 1999, the Dutch Department of Highways and Public Works (apparently dissatisfied with CUR Recommendation 38) proposed new, rather stringent supplementary specifications for new infrastructures. Their document received severe criticisms from the cement and concrete industry, particularly the Dutch Concrete and Aggregate Producers. They argued that the proposed supplementary specifications were in conflict with the situation in practice and that the document would undermine the Dutch government's policy regarding exploitation of aggregates for concrete. In response to these criticisms, a CUR Technical Committee VC 62: *"Alkali-silica reaction in concrete"* was set up in June 2000 to review CUR Recommendation 38. In late 2002, the task of the technical committee was completed and a new recommendation, CUR Recommendation 89 was published.

From onset of diagnosis of ASR damage in concrete in The Netherlands in the late eighties up to 2002, TNO Building and Construction Research has played active roles in research work involving all phases of the subject. Experts from the institute have served and continue to serve on various national and international committees and have participated in various seminars and conferences on ASR. In The Netherlands, TNO Building and Construction Research is regarded as the centre of expertise regarding ASR.

The papers presented in this special issue are part of TNO's contribution in the activities of the CUR Technical Committee VC 62. The TNO CUR VC 62-project was initiated by Dr Wim M.M. Heijnen, former senior scientist of TNO Building and Construction Research and completed by authors of the papers presented in this special issue.

On behalf of my colleagues of the Department of Civil Infrastructure, I wish to express our gratitude to the Editorial Board of *HERON* for granting us the opportunity to publish this special num-

ber. I also acknowledge the cordial support of my colleagues, especially the authors, and the reviewers for their contributions to this topical issue and making this piece of work a reality. Many thanks!

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